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STATE FOR NEA/ARPI, NEA/PPD, OES/ENV (BCATES)
STATE PASS USTR FOR JBUNTIN
AMMAN FOR EST HUB (JWHITTLESEY)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [SENV](#) [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [KPAO](#) [MU](#) [ESTH](#)
SUBJECT: ENVIRONMENTAL MOU SIGNED

REF: CATES-GRIMM EMAIL OF 2/25/06

1. (SBU) Ambassador and Under Secretary of Commerce and Industry Ahmad bin Hassan al-Dheeb signed the Free Trade Agreement (FTA)-related Memorandum of Understanding on Environmental Cooperation (MoU) during a February 26 ceremony at the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI). While other MOCI officials were on hand for the ceremony, absent "due to a last-minute commitment" was Muhammad bin Khamis al-Araimi, Under Secretary for the Ministry of Regional Municipalities, Environment, and Water Resources (MRMEWR).

2. (U) The signing ceremony received widespread and favorable local media coverage. During the press briefing, the Ambassador expressed the importance of the MoU in protecting the environment while promoting sustainable development as the U.S.-Oman Free Trade Agreement expands bilateral trade. He noted that the MoU provides both sides a formal framework to deepen environmental cooperation, as recently evidenced by the February Gulf Seismic Forum (septel) and the upcoming Fourth Meeting of the Signatory States of the Memorandum of Understanding on the Conservation and Management of Marine Turtles and Their Habitats of the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia.

3. (U) Per ref request, Embassy will pouch the signed documents to OES/ENV.
BALTIMORE